

CONOVER NEIGHBOR



January 2015

Code Enforcement

As a new year begins for the City of Conover we enter a new year of code enforcement. We would like to use this opportunity to refresh you on the main focus of Code Enforcement along with how it helps impact the City. The code enforcement program's main areas of focus have been nuisance abatement, junk vehicles, deteriorated/dilapidated structures and minimum housing requirements.



Nuisance abatement is the highest percentage of found and removed violations for code enforcement. Nuisance violations range from stagnant water that promotes pest habitation, overgrown grass, old couches, or automotive parts openly stored on a property. By removing these items within the City limits, Conover property values have an added level of protection and the overall appearance of the City is improved. Almost 300 nuisance violations have been found and removed in the past two years.



A junk vehicle in the City is defined as a vehicle that does not operate as originally intended, is wrecked, or is not worth more than \$500. A vehicle is not required to be registered or insured unless it will be driven on the public roadway. Over thirty vehicles have been classified as junk within the City with a majority of the vehicles being removed. Some of these vehicles have been proven to not be classified as junk by passing the three rules stated above. When a vehicle passes these tests, it may remain on the property.

Deteriorated and dilapidated structures can hurt a community both psychologically and financially. A community with numerous structures that are in disrepair that need maintenance or need to be removed can give a negative feeling to residents and visitors in addition to reducing surrounding property values. A deteriorated structure may still be repaired and cooperative efforts have been made with property owners to resolve issues found on approximately 25 homes or structures in Conover. A dilapidated structure, classified by a repair costs exceeding 50% of its value, must be removed. During the past two years a total of 4 homes have been willfully removed by their owners and two homes have been removed by the City after the state statutes have been followed granting the City the right of removal. Several other homes or structures have been identified within the City and will be removed in the coming calendar year.

The minimum housing code is in place to protect the residents of Conover while preserving property values. Minimum housing violations can range from windows that have been painted shut in a bedroom, creating an inability to escape in a fire, to the failing structural integrity of a building. Approximately 50 minimum housing violations have been documented. Most have resulted in the correction of the violation. A few have resulted in the cease of use for a rental property until the violation was removed.

The City ordinance is available on the City of Conover website (www.conovernnc.gov) and questions regarding the City code may always be directed to the code enforcement officer by contacting the Conover Police Department at 828-464-4698.

Conover I. T. Director Receives Prestigious State Award

Christopher Niver, Conover's Information Technology Director, was recently named winner of the 2014 James S. Cooper Award for his willingness to share knowledge and help fellow local and state government technology professionals throughout North Carolina. The award was presented by the North Carolina Local Government Information System Association (NCLGISA) which fosters collaboration and sharing of technical knowledge among North Carolina local governments and school systems. The award is given annually to an individual or agency for service above and beyond the normal performance of duties with regard to inter-agency cooperation.



Hiking Out Hunger

In partnership with ECCCM and The Corner Table, Brian Weaver of Conover, is starting an endeavor to begin *Hiking Out Hunger* in Eastern Catawba County. Around 20% of the homes in our own community, Eastern Catawba County, do not have enough food to eat on a daily basis, which includes about 60% of the children in our county. Brian is seeking to put an end to this crisis by raising money for ECCCM and The Corner Table, two crisis assistance organizations, to use in their current efforts of addressing the hunger crisis and also help them expand their efforts to bring more food to those who need it.



Hiking Out Hunger will be a 108-mile trek along the Appalachian Trail in May of 2015, from Fontana Dam to Hot Springs, NC, done by Brian and his friend Nathan. The goal is to raise \$50,000, about \$500/mile trekked. This money will be used by ECCCM and The Corner Table to purchase food and support their efforts in getting food to those in need. When you are doing a trip such as this, every mile counts towards reaching your goal. In the same way, with Hiking Out Hunger, every dollar counts in helping put an end to the hunger crisis in Eastern Catawba County. *All of the money raised* will go to ECCCM and The Corner Table to be used in their hunger assistance programs.

To learn more about this endeavor and donate go to the website: <http://ecccm.org/hike-out-hunger>. Brian is keeping a blog of preparing for this trip. It will be updated as he is on the trip, and even after. You can also follow on Facebook: Hiking Out Hunger, or Instagram: @Hikeouthunger. If you would like to talk to Brian about Hiking Out Hunger, please use the contact form on the webpage.

Planning Ahead:

**City Hall Closed January 1st for New Year's Day and
January 19th for Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday**

City Council: Meets the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at Conover City Hall

Planning Board: Meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Conover City Hall

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.”